

# CITY-COUNTY COMMON

County-City Building • 555 S. 10<sup>th</sup> Street • Lincoln, NE 68508

County Commissioners  
(402) 441-7447

Mayor  
(402) 441-7511

City Council  
(402) 441-7515

## COMMON AGENDA TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2003 COUNTY/CITY BUILDING CONFERENCE ROOM 113 8:30 A.M.

(Or Immediately Following the Joint LPS/City/County Meeting)

### I. MINUTES

- A. Minutes from Tuesday, October 7, 2003 Common Meeting

### II. PRESENTATIONS

- 8:30 a.m.      A.      Pop-up Desktop Digital Information Network System (30 Min) -  
Terry Lowe
- 9:00 a.m.      B.      Sinclair-Hille Update on the Health Department Expansion Project.  
(30 Min) - County Commissioners

### III ADJOURNMENT - Approx 10:00 a.m.

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## COMMON MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, November 4, 2003

8:30 a.m.

County/City Building - Room 113

*COUNCIL MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:* Ken Svoboda, Common Chair; Jon Camp; Jonathan Cook (arrived late); Glenn Friendt, Patte Newman, Terry Werner; *COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:* Annette McRoy, Patte Newman  
*MAYOR SENG:* In Attendance.

*COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:* Ray Stevens, Common Vice-Chair; Larry Hudkins Deb Schorr; Bob Workman; *COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:* Bernie Heier

Mr. Svoboda welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### 1. MINUTES

A. Minutes from Tuesday, October 7, 2003 Common Meeting

Mr. Ken Svoboda called for a motion to approve the above-listed minutes. Ray Stevens moved to approve the minutes as presented. Glenn Friendt seconded the motion which carried by unanimous consensus of the Common Members present.

THIS MEETING WAS SCHEDULED TO ADDRESS:

POP-UP DESKTOP DIGITAL INFORMATION NETWORK SYSTEM

SINCLAIR-HILLE UPDATE ON THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT EXPANSION PROJECT.

POP-UP DESKTOP DIGITAL INFORMATION NETWORK SYSTEM - Mr. Terry Lowe and Mr. Chris Plock of Information Services came forward to make the presentation. Mr. Lowe gave a brief history of the inception of the system, explaining that it had been initiated about one year ago to model the project for the Hometown Security Program. The background information can be accessed from the City's Home Page under Desktop Alert Install Information showing the power point presentation. Mr. Lowe stated that I.S. would be willing to give individual or group demonstrations of the slide shows and operation of the system to any of the Common Members who might be interested.

Mr. Lowe explained that the program was available on the wireless systems...which is where the future lies in computer technology. This allows us to get the emergency information to cell phones with short message text, to pda devices, and, of course, to the desk tops.

Mr. Lowe explained what had been done with the local CBS affiliate, (10/11-KFOR), where commercials have been run and will continue to run on that channel; and there is a brief over-view on the Channel 5 On-Demand Video. The promo shows that the system gives the latest "most up-to-date information on local weather, Amber Alerts, Homeland Security and even locally issued Hometown Security Alerts." Mr. Lowe ran the clip for the Common Members.

Mr. Lowe added that the promos were also running on Channel 5, Channels 10/11, and the KFOR stations. These are public service announcements and are, therefore, provided to the City at no cost. Mr. Lowe added that there are four partners that allow the City to do these kinds of things (radio and television commercials). It has been helpful to us in getting the word out on this project.

Mr. Lowe told the Common that there is a 36 minute "on-the-net" video, a Channel -5 production, that goes into more depth on this presentation. The original news conference done in February with Mayor Wesely is also shown on the web. This all started with Hometown Security and the news conference shows what this product allows our Emergency Services coordinators to do and how we'll do it.

There were two phases to this project. The first phase has been completed. That was the roll-out internally. We have over a 1,000 machines inside our network now that have this application loaded on it. There are 3500, and growing, everyday out in the public sector. That means that every desk-top that has this application loaded on can be directly communicated with to offer weather alerts, and we've just recently signed with the State Patrol on Amber Alerts and Homeland Security updates. As soon as those statuses change, they automatically go to the PCs, the PDAs.

Phase Two is what were here to talk about today. Where will we go from here? This has been rolled-out and is widely accepted; but now we need to get it more strategically deployed to the community so we have a good blanket of coverage, so when we hit the button, just as we throw the sirens, the machine will go off. We've piloted a couple of places - State Farm being one of the them. We've installed it on a few of their machines so it dove-tails into their operations. So, if a tornado does come, and they need to get people into a shelter, they're able to do it that way without having every machine go off.

Mr. Lowe plans, within the next few months, to get the program out to the public schools, the private schools, into churches, into medical facilities such as hospitals, nursing homes, and rehabilitation centers - where ever people congregate at work, during the day.

Mr. Workman noted that Mr. Lowe had indicated the system would be strategically deployed everywhere, but he pointed out that most County residents have low-speed, dial-up internet connections, which means that their computer won't be on all the time. How are we going to address that? Mr. Lowe responded that part of the concern when initiating this program was how to reach those people with dial-up internet access. Mr. Lowe reported that nearly 85% of the people still have dial-up access. This product works beautifully with it. He stated that he benchmarked this on Pentium 200, Windows 95 with 48 Meg of memory on a 288 dial-up, which is about as bad as it's going to get - and it worked just fine with this. So, we

knew we could reach out to the rural community. They can still see the radar, they will get all the messages coming to them. But, you're right, if they're not on all the time (if they don't have a DSL, cable-modem, a satellite hook up that is on all the time) - it will only work when they turn it on. But, *when* they turn it on, if there is an existing forecast, Amber alert, or whatever, currently running, it will ship it to them immediately.

The National and Amber alerts are launched automatically. We'll get about a 3-4 minute jump on the local weather broadcasts. The National Homeland Security codes are immediately changed on this application so we're kept in tune on that; and the power of this is that that is what the citizens get.

What we get is the ability to launch local alerts. The Police, the Fire, the Sheriff's Office, 911, the Health Department, now have the tool in their hands that can immediately, within 60 seconds, alert everybody in the County that has this application. Some event is taking place, and the citizen needs to take some action -whatever that might be. There was a recent alert on a State Penitentiary escapee that alerted citizens to that danger.

If there is a child that is snatched, but the situation doesn't rise to the level of "Amber", and the State won't issue an Amber alert at the state-wide level, we can, locally, give the alert that we have a missing child, with a picture & the demographics. So, this gives us a lot of power.

Emergency Service coordinators can use it to augment the National Weather Service, so if we have a spotter that says we've got one on the ground, this confirmed warning can be sent instantly. Ms. Schorr asked whose decision is it (and at what point) to launch the alert? Mr. Lowe answered that that is an interesting question, because every jurisdiction is a little bit different. Mr. Lowe stated that Lincoln was the first in the nation to put this out. We got a wonderful write-up in "Government Technology" magazine about instant alerts. Buffalo County at Kearney came on second; Sioux City, IA, South Sioux City, NE and North Sioux City, SD all came together as a group to buy one application for the area. So, who decides to launch what and when and where? Right now, weather comes automatically. Homeland Security comes automatically. The Amber Alerts will now come automatically. We were launching those (Chris and I). We've been working, in Phase Two, to get these into the controls of the Police Department, Fire Department and the Sheriff's Office. They'll have administration screens where they can make a determination and they all have to agree to a protocol so they don't launch on top of each other. Those protocols have to be worked out between the public safety agencies. The Health Department always has the statutory right to put out health alerts. In some jurisdictions, like in Buffalo County, they've put it all in the 911 Center. They have a 24/7 group of people who are trained, plus the Sheriff and Police -even the schools- can call the Center where, with certain restrictions, they can request an alert to go out. Then the 911 Service launches it centrally.

Mr. Lowe noted that Lincoln is looking at both of those solutions. Basically, it allows every entity to launch their own. In Lincoln/Lancaster County, it appears that everybody wants to have their own control over their screens. So, when the Sheriff or Police want to launch one they can - and don't have to go through anybody to do it.

Mr. Lowe continued the demonstration, showing how the program runs. Mr. Camp asked if the program, running active on the desk top, took up much memory on ones computer? Mr. Lowe assured the Common Members that it did not. He explained that one of the reasons why this product is so widely accepted is that it has such a small footprint and is tuned for people with dial-up. It doesn't come down with a lot of signals. It doesn't come down with a lot of graphics. The graphics you see "live" on the machine....they're not pushing the computer down, like the Weather Bug product does. When it's sent down, it is compressed, so the work of expanding it out is done on the PC or laptop. There isn't a lot of band width coming at you. We have a caching server between us and where this product actually "lives" -which is in Oklahoma City...and two other physical jurisdictions because of redundancy issues for Federal Contract- we use this for base security as well.

He outlined the project's inception which began after he saw the product in Omaha in a presentation geared to the media market. He had seen the potential of tuning it up a little, taking off the advertising, and the foundation of what it *could* be used for is there. Mr. Lowe contacted the president of the company, and immediately saw a government market niche. That is where it started moving. We were their Alpha site. We tuned this product so it works for government; it's priced for government. That is why it's starting to take off. We demonstrated this in the National Web Manager's Forum in April at Miami and it's been shown a dozen other times - including the Kansas City Webmaster forum which was held several weeks ago.

Mr. Lowe went on to explain the details of the program, none of which needed a browser, but only an internet access. We have links to InterLinc so we're leveraging all of our investment in InterLinc to drill the user right down into where you want to go. So, instead of advertisement, like the national media does, we use InterLinc. We're focusing everything on public safety, such as snow emergencies, street closing, crime maps, etc. We have full control over the graphics we put on there and where we target our website. It's a very sophisticated bookmark. At any point, you can connect to InterLinc. We've monitored it and made it the same colors so it looks like an extension of our website.

Mr. Friendt asked about the on-line payment spot that was shown. Mr. Lowe explained that was the InterLinc site where the public can pay parking tickets, water bills, get criminal history and property taxes and renew animal control licenses.

Ms. Schorr asked if I.S. had given this presentation to rural fire departments? She thought it would be helpful to those people to be able to monitor weather conditions. Mr. Lowe answered that they have. He had been to both Hickman and Waverly and both of those cities have them installed. That's part of the Phase II roll-out. We've worked with Darl to get the Economic Development group through the Chamber of Commerce to reach the businesses and industry sectors as well.

We can create groups of elected officials, or villages, or a building -State Farm Campus, for instance. And send only a "crawler" to them and nobody else would get it. It's a tremendous communication tool. If there were, God forbid, a school shooting, and we wanted to alert all of the High School principals in one sweep, within 60 seconds, a crawler could be sent to security people, principals - whoever was set up on the list. They would all immediately be notified that an event has taken place and to take appropriate action.

Mr. Lowe commented that when he was demonstrating the program to the State CIO, there was a SWAT situation near two elementary schools -not that they were involved, but they didn't want the kids walking by- if the program had been installed, we could have alerted those schools to keep the children inside. There is still, of course, phone, fax and e-mail. But this is a much more reliable tool for us. It gets us to where the people are. For workers, (who don't have easy access to radio or television, it never interferes with the PC, it stays hidden behind the screens; but as soon as an alert gets launched out, the screen pops up & the crawler will scroll across the lower portion of the screen tray. Mr. Workman asked if a pop-up stopper would interfere with this program. Mr. Lowe answered that it would not. This is a different kind of an application than a pop-up. It's an application that is running on the PC at all times. It's not a push application, like Weather Bug, but a pull technology with just minimum band width use.

We're going to be getting into the business communities, into the industry sector. We're going to be getting into the education sector. We've started talking to the University of Nebraska to get the campuses involved and get the dorms hooked up with this. We'll also be in the medical community....we're trying to cover all aspects of the community and get a good blanket over the project, so we can depend on it when we throw the sirens. There will be a large number of people that are going to be effected by this.

That's Phase II. - We'll let you know, too, this project cost us zero dollars, because we were the Alpha site for them. We took them out of the media market and put them into the government niche. As we spent our time tuning it, we have a three year contract with no cost at all. And no great cost either as we're continually testing for their new product lines that are coming out.

Mr. Lowe explained that they were working with the Emergency Communications Director. Hopefully we'll get this all coordinated. There will be more commercials and radio spots promoting this. We'll be stuffing mailings.

Mr. Camp asked what the protections were for the City against something coming back into the City system from all of these outside connections? Mr. Lowe stated that we don't host this program. The host program is down south in a bank of servers...Digital Information Network's mission in life is to build more and more server forums. As more cities come on line, they buy more hardware. They also buy more internet access. At first we considered hosting this, but then we would be using our band width, our resources, and our network. We thought "no" - this is designed with military people in mind. We have over a million people on the program. It isn't a new technology. It's been around for about six years...it just hasn't been around for government. It's on their server - redundantly in three places. It's just the normal way to get to the internet for browsers, so there is no way to come back in the other direction for infecting our system with viruses or feeding something back with a spoof alert. That can't happen. They have better than DensityThree Encryption down there because of their military contracts. We're very confident that this is the right group to be working with on this.

Mr. Friendt asked if there is a monthly charge for the server service. Mr. Lowe said that we're getting it for free. It's a free download. The citizen's get the product and we get connectivity. The product would cost about \$40,000, plus 33% per year for upgrades and maintenance. The reason why that is a little higher than the industry standard (which is normally about 18-20% to get new upgrades in software) is because they buy all the internet access. They host the applications, they're the ones that we send all our graphics to when we want to change it. So they have a lot of investment on their end to house this application; and we have very little.

Mr. Camp asked about the potential audience for the crawl messages. He asked who consolidates, or compiles the list? Mr. Lowe stated that that is why this next phase is a real leg-work kind of deal. It has to be a very controlled roll-out. If we go to all the high schools and get the principals, the security officer, or an administrative assistant - and we just load it on that many machines, this product works to that machine. If you move that machine to another building, the message would still go to that machine. There is a GUID id number that Microsoft gives us which uniquely identifies each PC. This is the number on the list down in Oklahoma City. So, when we build these groups, what we're doing is categorizing a bunch of machines together and calling the group "public school", for instance. ... That is just a list of these machine numbers so when we send a message out, those machines are the only ones that get it...when we send to a select group. When we send a generic one, it goes to everybody, but when we build these select groups, we'll not only build, but maintain those - so whenever there is a change in the machine operator, we'll have to unload the software on the old machine and re-load it on the new one. But to keep these lists clean, we'll be doing monthly types of launches as we do with our sirens. If the intended recipient reports that they didn't receive the scheduled launch, they can report & we'll know that there needs to be a change. We'll transfer the software so we know they'll still be getting those messages. It's a very "us to the machine" kind of orientation.

Mr. Camp asked if they could do that without the recipient's input? Mr. Lowe stated that they can. The database is available to us in Administration sheets. Groups and subgroups can be built for precise targeting, but we'll have to monitor them to insure that we're getting the alerts to those that are intended to receive them.

Mr. Workman stated that he understood that it will not cost us for three years, but if it did, you indicated that it would be \$40,000 up front, then 33% per year - is that \$12,000 per year? Mr. Lowe responded affirmatively to that question. Mr. Workman asked if that would be a the same amount for a smaller community? Mr. Lowe said "No". He indicated that that is the neat part about this. He reported that when he had talked with them about how this had to be priced so government could deal with it he had

explained that we'd like to have to go to our elected officials only once -not every year- and say we need money for this product. We want to buy it like software. In the media markets, they would do the market share. Omaha is rated a certain way and they would charge based on how many people they think they'll reach. What they've done for government is based it on population base. The potential is always higher in college towns. The floor of the program is at \$10,000, so a small community like Norfolk with 20,000 people could easily afford the product. Then they'd have a 33% annual operating cost.

Mr. Lowe explained that there is a start-up charge to get the graphics set up. Mr. Lowe explained that Chris had done all the work, but they gave us a template, so we custom built it for our needs. We shipped that down to Oklahoma City. There is, for larger cities, a one-time charge of \$10,000 to get it launched, with cost depending on the population base.

Continuing with the presentation, Mr. Low explained that we can get to detail down to even neighborhood levels. Mr. Stevens stated that he appreciated the effort that Mr. Lowe and Mr. Plock had put into this - especially at the price. [Mr. Lowe noted that free is always good]. Mr. Stevens commented that if the on-going cost after the three years is \$12,-13,000 - that would appear to be a reasonable expense for something like this. He noted that he couldn't wait to try it, but he didn't want to be receiving warnings for and about areas not directly affecting him. He felt he could get such information from the media and would prefer that he have the knowledge that any warnings he received would be immediate to his concerns and safety.

Mr. Lowe commented that they had purposely not wanted to be crying wolf. They wanted this product to go out there with the public perception that it is dependable and the citizens can see that we're pro-active - it's a protection issue. That's basic government - public safety. So, the only time you'll see alerts coming off this thing is when we truly want to tell someone that they need to take some action to protect themselves....or we need to tell them about an Amber case. The only time the alarm goes off is if Lancaster County is included in the launch. He noted that he wasn't interested, either, in warning of storms going through Otoe County that would hit Omaha. We could have easily have done that - including any of those 19 Counties where weather alerts went off - to send an alert. We said "No". Unless Lancaster is included in that group of counties, we won't even know about it. That doesn't mean you can't go out and look, but it won't bother you - and the program is tunable in the sense that you can turn the sound off, but what comes to the screen, you'll get. That is why InterLinc froze it to just Lancaster County. Lincoln Journal Star has their desk-top alert. They're targeting news media. They want to let you know when a news event took place. We only want to let you know when public safety issues come in....so government is a little different.

Mr. Svoboda thanked Mr. Lowe and Mr. Plock for their efforts. He stated that he would be calling them for some more specific questions. Mr. Lowe said he would love to meet with any of the Common Mmembers individually and give them the whole walk-through. There are so many little hidden clicks. Ms. Schorr thought it was amazing that Lincoln was the first in the nation to submit this to a government application. She offered congratulations to Lincoln's I.S. Department.

Ms. Ray asked when the "elected officials" group could be ready? Mr. Lowe stated that would happen when the officials got the program all loaded on their machines. We could start that right away. He stated that his goal on this program, working with Emergency Services, is to get these deployed before the tornado season hits. If we get that done, that would be a reasonable amount of time. It will take one-on-one doing these kinds of presentations - unless I can get a group of business people in a room...in one setting and answer all those technical questions that they're all going to have, it means we're going to have to meet with them one-on-one. But, if we can get one machine in a business to protect a 1,000 people, it's worth our time to do that.

Mr. Friendt commented that the City helps fund LPED and he suggested that this might be the kind of thing on which Mr. Lowe should be in touch with LPED - and coordinate with them in reaching the business community with this program. He felt this was the type of program they would love to show to an invited list of 100 businesses. Mr. Lowe stated that he would love to get endorsement letters from the Common to help us move that forward. It would be wonderful.

Mr. Hudkins asked if Mr. Lowe had been working on this with Doug Ahlberg? Mr. Lowe answered that yes, he had. Mr. Hudkins stated that Mr. Ahlberg had a network with all those people and locations that he works with. Mr. Lowe stated that they were still waiting for their dog tags. He noted that there is a hit team being set up. If there is a huge emergency, where we'll all be down in the bunkers, we'll have people staffed down there who can constantly be shipping out messages to people.

SINCLAIR-HILLE UPDATE ON THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT EXPANSION PROJECT. Mr. John Kay of Sinclair-Hille and Mr. Bruce Dart, Director of the Health Department, came forward for the presentation. Mr. Kay passed out material to the Common Members on the latest concept of the expansion project for the Health Department. This had been discussed at a meeting with the neighborhood just last Sunday. The concept shows a build to the east, with a budget which shows figures to a mid-construction date of August, 2005.

Mr. Kay introduced the team from Sinclair-Hillie in attendance: Matt Knutzon and Dan Grasso. He stated that they had been working with the Health Department Staff as well as Parks & Rec and the City Traffic Engineering Office on the proposed expansion of the Health Department facility at 31<sup>st</sup> and "N" Streets adjacent to Woods Park. This began as something that was identified in the 10-Year County-City Master Plan. That Plan was approved by the Public Building Commission in January of '03. One of the major needs was a solution to the over-crowding situation at the Health Department campus. So, from February until now, we've been working with the neighbors and the other public agencies involved. There have been several community meetings to try to find solutions to this problem.

Mr. Kay showed the Common Members several of the options that had been considered including South Expansion into the existing parking lot; a North expansion; and through dialogue with the various project partners, we ended up in an East solution. The architectural programing looked at the need for 40,000 gross square feet of additional space. They're currently occupying around 31,000 sq. feet. Looking at the budget numbers for a 40,000 square foot expansion, the cost was determined to be prohibitive at the time, so we scaled it back by eliminating a lot of spaces, such as conference, storage, a public health response center that is associated with environmental public health (a division within the Health Department). We scaled it down to a 34,000 gross square foot facility. That is what we'll show you now.

Mr. Kay went through a slide presentation that showed a three-dimensional rendition of the proposed project. He showed several of the options that had originally been considered with the final East/North option that was ultimately decided upon. He noted that the Sinclair-Hille staff had worked closely with Parks & Rec Staff, (Lynn Johnson and J.J. Yost), Scott Opfer of the City Traffic Division of the Public Works Department, as well as Bruce Dart and Judy Halstead of the Health Department.

Mr. Kay reviewed the history of the progress of this project, through the neighborhood meetings, the community based meetings with open houses, presentations to the Public Building Commission, and the Parks & Rec Advisory Board. All of the dialogue and input from neighbors has been important to the Health Department. Mr. Kay reviewed and summarized the preliminary site concepts briefly which dated back to last summer. Mr. Kay noted that the summarizations had been discussed with the neighbors and their feed-back indicated that there was resistance to the south expansion scheme; the north scheme was marginally acceptable; the 33<sup>rd</sup> Street connection was completely unacceptable and the preferred option was going to the North in a horizontal orientation. Extending Rogers Drive was unanimously rejected.

The neighbors wanted the plan to be mindful of the impact at Woods Park - avoid adverse impact. Consolidating the Health Department at this location was questioned. They talked about decentralizing the satellite facilities and perhaps re-locating Animal Control out of the building. They strongly opposed the



acquisition of the two residential properties; their main concern was reducing traffic in the park and neighborhood and shifting to an "O" Street entrance and presence. They strongly preferred concepts that did just that - a North addition. These meetings occurred last July and August. We responded, after listening carefully to their input. The other solutions were then placed into motion which looked at going to the east to try to meet those concerns. Then in September/October, we've been looking at concepts that put the addition in the former Rose Garden of Woods Park.

The various options were shown to the Common members and reviewed, with explanations as to the criteria used in evaluating each with an in-depth report on the final, proposed option for expansion. It was explained that the Parks & Rec Department has plans for the existing trail, being tied into the back entry to the first floor entrance. This area could be secured at night for after-hour meetings for the public.

The presentation showed three-dimensional slides of the proposed expansion. Future expansion capabilities had also been considered in this model. The concept provided for "shelling out" part of the third floor, which would be 6,000 square feet of additional space. The goal would be to provide for future expansion without having to acquire anymore land. To be able to shell that space out at this time is a very economical approach. Coming back in the future to add that on would be a difficult prospect and would obviously be more expensive as well.

One of the questions asked at a previous Public Building Commission meeting, was what if the whole floor were done for future expansion and we didn't leave part of that unbuilt. Mr. Knutzon showed the three-dimensional scheme of such a build out. The parking counts that have been shown would accommodate that third floor expansion. Only three more stalls would be required if the entire third floor were shelled out for future use.

The existing lot currently has more space than is really needed for drive lanes, etc. It could be re-worked to become a much more efficient lot. More stalls can be built in the area to increase the parking stall count without increasing the area.

Mr. Stevens noted that the public has no access from the East and no exit from the West, and Mr. Hudkins amended, "without going back to "O" Street". Mr. Stevens noted that is the only access the public has - is "O" Street. You're not going to turn left if you're going west into that area. When exiting, you couldn't go West because of "O" Street. It was pointed out that access could come from 31<sup>st</sup> Street. Mr. Stevens noted that, as a practical matter, it is impossible unless you're in the middle of the night when there is no traffic. He acknowledged that there is no median, but traffic would prohibit access to the West. Mr. Dart stated, that it is difficult, but staff currently does that all the time. Sometimes the wait is overwhelming, but that is usually only during the rush hour. Other than that, staff currently turns left there all day long.

Common members asked several logistics questions regarding the parking/traffic situation. These were answered and the options reviewed, including dual turn lanes since the roadway is not one-way. Mr. Camp asked if there were any hopes of a traffic light there? Mr. Dart answered that they had held that discussion with the Traffic Engineering Department and that Department's response (very adamantly held) is that that would not be a working plan. It would not even be feasible with the nature and volume of the traffic at the location. A traffic signal would create more problems than not having one there. Mr. Camp agreed that keeping the "O" Street traffic flowing would be a great concern.

Ms. Schorr commented, regarding the third floor, if it were brought all the way out to "O" Street, it would almost give it an overwhelming, and perhaps, too strong a presence. What are the aesthetics of doing that as opposed to the a partial third floor? She noted that there is no other three-story building along that street that she could think of. Mr. Hudkins commented that there is one other possibility that isn't shown here. He stated that there is about a six foot elevation decrease from the existing building as you come out

towards "O" Street. We could build with a day-light basement toward the back. We'd talked about that briefly at one point. He added that the addition doesn't come out to "O" Street. It sets back far enough ... that's how you would access the parking lot between "O" Street and the Health Department Building.

Mr. Dart stated that there are plans for underground expansion. Mr. Dart asked Ms. Judy Halstead of the Health Department to explain that to the Common. Ms. Halstead reported that in looking at the programming for the shelled space, when we decreased from the 40,000 sq. ft. to the 34,000 sq. ft., a couple of the things that were looked at were future use needs. One of these needs is to look at an emergency use space that would have to be below ground. So, if we're looking at shelling some of this space for the future, some of that is going to have to go below ground, because of our future needs for emergency response, which does have to go below ground. Some of the other things that we can have below ground are the commons areas of storage space, some of the utilities areas and those kinds of things, so that the actual shelled space if we go a full 11,000 square feet does not have to be on the third floor. We could look at going below ground. Actually, for our future use needs, below ground probably is better for us.

It was noted that some sort of presence on "O" Street is to be desired. This proposed project would help them in that regard, so people coming along "O" Street can recognize the facility, would know where to go and would be a little clearer on how to access the facility. Potentially, that could keep them out of the neighborhood. That was one of the goals that we kept hearing - a better "O" Street presence for the Health Department.

Ms. Schorr stated that a second question she had was in regard to the Woods Park Rose Garden. There was a reference that the Health Department was moving into the Rose Garden, but the roses have been re-located to another area in the park. Mr. Dart stated that that was correct - the area is now the "former" Rose Garden.

Mr. Kay stated that Mr. Lynn Johnson has indicated that the trees that will be effected are in the last stages of their life-cycle, so something would have to be done with them, regardless of the expansion. The Rose Garden was designed to be a quiet space within the park & that really conflicts with the fact that it is right next to a major arterial in Lincoln. There is a lot of fast traffic and noise coming off "O" Street. So, to have this as a quite space in the park really doesn't work and it's not used that way.

Mr. Werner asked Mr. Grasso if the buildings shown to the bottom right in the plan were owned by the City? It was indicated that the City did not own them. Mr. Werner inquired as to the ownership of the buildings, and was informed that one was owned by a woman in Omaha. He asked if it would be \$1,000,000 plus to acquire those properties? Mr. Dart answered that it would be a million plus - which is one of the reasons why we decided not to go that route. Mr. Killeen, Director of the Public Building Commission, stated that the assessed valuation of the whole parcel - all the properties, plus relocation costs, etc. would be \$1,000,000. If the B&J properties only were acquired, how much? Mr. Dart said that they would need the whole package to make the expansion feasible. Mr. Werner noted that it was costing \$300,000 for the Park land acquisition....noting then that we're talking a difference of \$700,000.

Mr. Dart answered that it only made sense if they could acquire all of the commercial and residential sites at the location. Mr. Werner commented that he had a concern regarding the taking of park land - over a 50 year period, there would be a costly negative impact.

Mr. Dart stated that he didn't disagree with that, but there has been a lot of discussion about this park serving the community, but the Health Department serves the community too. The best use of our facility and that land fulfill and meet those community needs.

Mr. Cook asked about the parking lot, wondering if the south employee parking lot shouldn't be moved to the east of the proposed complex. Whether going into the park is desirable or not, which Mr. Cook didn't believe was as good an option as some of the proposed alternatives, it is worthy of discussion. If we are going

to go eastward into the park, why not just go for it and move all of the parking into that area so it's all along "O" Street, all accessed from "O" Street. We could remove the lot from the south location and make that green space - essentially, swapping park land. That would eliminate the traffic through the neighborhood. Had that option been looked at? Were there cost estimates on such an option?

Mr. Dart answered that they had not looked at that option, but noted that it is another alternative to look at and discuss. It really comes down to what is most desirable for the park. That discussion would tie in - we haven't had a chance to look at that yet, but we can see what that cost would be.

Mr. Kay commented that there were three concepts that came out of the Sunday night meeting - some similar to what Mr. Cook was suggesting. It would involve the swap of south parking. These suggestions were noted in the summary hand-out. [On File in Council Office]. In each case, they're talking about returning this to park land. There are three ways to do that. Mr. Kay reviewed each of these options briefly for the Common Members.

Mr. Ray Stevens asked, irrespective of the \$1,000,000 cost of acquiring those commercial properties -if there were a benefactor who donated a million dollars, and we acquired those buildings- are they useable for the purposes of the Health Department - are they good buildings? Mr. Dart answered that for the purposes of the Health Department, though they aren't "bad" buildings, they would not be suitable. The layout of the buildings would all have to be converted to office space. It would be much easier to raze them and build something that we actually need.

Ms. Halstead offered one other point of clarification - stating that if we actually acquire that property, the relocation of existing staff that are in the leased properties is not included in our costs. The estimates are about 12-15 months for building and we would have to relocate the staff that are currently in that leased space. Those costs are not before you.

Mr. Friendt asked, with this, or any other option, he wanted to be sure that, from the Health Department's standpoint and the rest of the elected leadership, that we end up with the very best alternative that we can. This is meant for 225-250,000 of our citizens - not just for the 40 or 50 or 500 neighbors that live around the Park. He wanted to be sure that as we accommodate the specific neighborhood requests, we don't end up getting further away from the best solution for the total community.

Mr. Dart stated that they had been trying very hard to balance these concerns. As he has stated, they are here to serve the community, but at the same time we want to be good neighbors. It is difficult to develop both of those concepts and meet the community needs.

Mr. Friendt asked, on behalf of the citizens, how is it that we're paying \$300,000 plus for property that we own? Please explain that. Mr. Lynn Johnson stated that Woods Park was donated to the City as a gift from the Woods family in the late 1940s. It is deed restricted. The deed states that the property needs to be used for a public purpose....not just park purposes, but it does state "public purpose". There have been Federal landmark conservation funds used in the development of the facilities in Woods Park - the tennis bubbles are part of that. When the City accepts those Federal funds, the City then agrees, essentially, to another deed restriction in which, if the park land is converted from an outdoor recreation use to another use, it has to be replaced on a value per value basis. So, in order for this to happen, what would need to be done is have a fair market appraisal made on the value of this property and then have that property replaced on a value per value basis...somewhere in the community. So, we would need to buy -if there is \$300,000 worth of park land at this location- there needs to be \$300,000 worth of park land purchased at another location. Mr. Friendt stated then we're not going to take this away from the community, we're just going to re-locate some of this park land somewhere else? Mr. Johnson stated that that was correct.

Mr. Werner commented that he believed Mr. & Mrs. Woods are probably turning in their graves when you talk that way. They donated this park for a purpose. The City has continually, since he has been on the Council [to observe], chipped away at the Park. We've put Wesleyan in there; we have an Olympic swimming

pool in there; we have tennis courts in there. Now we're going to take another chunk and send it someplace else in the City. Mr. Werner felt this was amazingly short-sighted when we're talking about a possible \$1,000,000 investment that we're looking at 25-50 years down the road. We have an opportunity here to give the neighbors back their neighborhood and take the traffic away. We have an opportunity not to harm the park and we're talking about \$700,000.00 He commented that he knew that was a lot of money, but ... in the long run, to preserve that neighborhood and take traffic away from them, to preserve our park that was donated and deed restricted, Mr. Werner personally thought it was huge mistake not to do that.

Mr. Johnson explained that they shared Mr. Werner's concern about this being a gift to the community. We wanted to make sure we weren't violating that trust. We met with Tom Woods III - it was his great-grandfather that donated the funds for this. We shared this plan with Tom and gave him some time to think about it. He indicated that he is comfortable with this proposal. He wants, definitely, to be involved in the development of the plans to see how that interface between the building and the park happens.

Mr. Werner asked if the cost of the development plans had been figured into the project? So, we move and purchase more land....are we talking about other costs that we need to be figuring in? Mr. Dart answered that this project is only being figured on the cost to the Health Department. He stated that he was unable to speak to other costs. Mr. Werner stated that when a person donates land, specifically says that it has a restricted use, he was not sure that it was the right of someone three generations removed to say "it's alright" to make it a parking lot.

Ms. Schorr requested Mr. Johnson to talk about the Talent Plus and how the funds that the City/County received from that property were used to benefit other areas of the community. She was sure that we would be doing something very similar in this situation. She requested that Mr. Johnson discuss the four quadrants of the City and how those funds were disbursed. She added that she had a follow-up question.

Mr. Johnson answered that if this process happens, it would be very similar to what we did with the sale of land at Holmes Golf Course with Talent Plus. It's the same situation with land and water conservation funds used in the development of Holmes Park, so that conversion of land went through the same process. He added that there were about \$655,000 that came off of the sale of that property. Land was purchased in three different areas of the community with that money. We purchased 55 acres just to the east of Pioneers Park; a new neighborhood park was purchased in the ECHO Neighborhood and a portion of the proceeds of that went to purchase what we're calling a Northeast Community Park at 30<sup>th</sup> and Leighton. That was distributed throughout the community. Actually, the State Game and Parks Commission, and the National Parks Service have to review those proposals. They look at it on a value per value basis. The intent is that you're also replacing it on an open-space/recreation value basis as well. So, you're replacing, essentially, not only the value in dollars, but the value in that land to the community.

Ms. Schorr commented on the purchase of the B&J Property, talking about the \$1,000,000 plus, noting that what must be factored in is the removal of that property from the tax rolls. And property tax income over years and decades....so that is a factor that needs to be taken into consideration.

Ms. Schorr added that, talking about the land swap and putting more concrete on the "O" Street frontage....as you drive down 48<sup>th</sup> and "O" - all you see is concrete. That is one advantage to all Lincoln residents - when driving down "O" Street to have the green space visually there. If we just move more concrete...we'll all just be seeing a tiny green space. She wanted that to be considered in the project development, too.

Mr. Camp asked Ms. Halstead, regarding the lease of the current property for Staff, how long is that lease to last? Ms. Halstead stated that they are on a month-by-month lease with B&J right now. Secondly, Mr. Camp stated that he appreciated what Mr. Werner had mentioned on the park land concerns. This is something that we've discussed at the Public Building Commission level and is one of the things that needs to be looked at when we start talking about the deed restrictions. Mr. Camp felt they were being a little overly-specific on that. This is something that, as we go through time, we have to understand that changes in use will

occur. The Health use - the Health Department itself is one that the Woods Charitable Foundation and the Woods family has been very supportive of...specifically the Health Endowment and the new Health Clinic on North 27<sup>th</sup>. While it is important to look at that protection, he felt there had been a lot of safe-guards in the process and Mr. Camp stated that he would hate to get over-emotional at this point.

Mr. Camp stated that he agreed with Ms. Schorr. He felt the way it's been planned with the landscaping there...the width of that parking lot in relation to going clear over to 33<sup>rd</sup>, you're going to still have a nice expanse. There was a lot of care...in fact with that little trail that comes around there and the future sculpture garden, the Parks Department has been very considerate of that. It is a beautiful green space and he complimented that architects and landscape designers for trying to preserve that as best as possible.

Mr. Friendt commented, noting that the issue of Memorial Drive through, and the Public Works feeling that it would be good to have that access down to "J" Street, in an effort to keep traffic out of the neighborhood...is that possible? Mr. Dart answered that that is why the Public Works Department actually commissioned a hearing to study that as a part of our goals. He noted that Mr. Opfer could better address that concern.

Mr. Scott Opfer of the City's Public Works Department -Traffic Operations Division, came forward to address the Common members. He stated that that was the primary reason they had brought the issue forward. As many of the Common members are aware, we've been dealing for several years with the Woods Park Neighborhood and the traffic issues there. The Health Department's traffic comes up quite often in the discussions. But, one of the things that has occurred currently, (and not just the Health Department), but traffic on a daily basis, 31<sup>st</sup> Street actually accesses this to come to the Health Department as well as various park activities. They line this street on a daily basis. One of the proposals was to extend Roger's Memorial Drive to "J" Street to keep that traffic from being in the neighborhood. We actually closed an area off and made a proposed pedestrian crossing there so the neighborhood could still access the park. Mr. Opfer thought that this would keep all of the traffic from the park out of the neighborhood completely. The Health Department commissioned an engineering firm to see if this was feasible. It was. That was one of the first things that the neighborhood threw out. They did not want that access.

Mr. Friendt asked, when you say "the neighborhood" what about those 25 people in the section of 31<sup>st</sup> Street? Are they the ones that threw it out? Mr. Opfer answered that they were there and involved and were some of those who spoke the loudest about not having that connection. They preferred it in front of their house vs. in back of their house.

Mr. Opfer also noted that the parking lot proposed by Mr. Cook to, in theory, move the traffic out of the neighborhood....for those of you who are aware of all the schools that are sited around arterials...you can do everything you want to try to move that traffic off of "O" Street, they will still use this neighborhood whether you provide parking or not. The only difference would be that he would be out there taking neighborhood requests to prohibit parking along their streets, which will then have traffic moving even faster. Just relocating that park does not move the traffic out of the neighborhood...it will still be there.

Mr. Werner commented that it would certainly move the Health Department traffic out. Mr. Opfer noted that it might move some of the traffic. Mr. Werner noted that if they can't park there and can't access it, they won't be parking there. Mr. Opfer stated that if you remove all the parking, then you start getting into hardships with property owners because they can't park there either. Yet, ultimately, if you removed all the parking, if you think about what goes on down around Southeast and Northeast High Schools and the surrounding neighborhoods - they can't even park in front of their own homes - so the neighborhood "feel" begins to really deteriorate.

Mr. Werner asked Mr. Johnson if we had a land swap, is there a place in the Woods Park neighborhood that you could purchase additional green space? Mr. Johnson stated that probably not in the immediate area - without taking out homes. We haven't gone through a discussion with the community about where this should be replaced...if, indeed, it is replaced. He added that he was not aware of anything in the Woods Park

neighborhood that isn't already built. When you look at the Woods Park neighborhood compared with other neighborhoods, it's actually pretty well served with park resources. Woods Park is located there, American Legion Park is at 27<sup>th</sup> & Randolph, Neighbors Park is at Capital Parkway at about "D" Street.

Mr. Werner asked if the baseball field there is the new Wesleyan Field? Mr. Johnson stated that it was. Mr. Werner stated, then, that the neighbors can't use that. Mr. Johnson explained that they have access to it, by request from Wesleyan. Mr. Werner asked if they had to get permission and a key? Mr. Johnson said that they do. Mr. Werner commented then that the kids can't have a "pick up" ball game there, right? So, they lost that whole corner. Mr. Johnson responded by noting that a certain area of the park had been upgraded, which would now be the area for "pick-up" ball games. Mr. Werner persisted, noting that, essentially, they lost that area. Mr. Johnson conceded that it is fenced off to informal use.

Mr. Werner stated that he respected Ms. Schorr's remark about taking things off the tax rolls and he felt that was not a goal we would strive for, but we are also talking about the quality of life in this neighborhood and the ability to help them to reduce some traffic. We're talking about their green space - in the middle of the City. It is valuable to have that green space in the middle of our City and [we should] NOT keep chipping away and eroding it. He felt the trade-off for the neighborhood, for the Park and for the community (because it is a community park) - for that [monetary] difference - it is a big mistake in the long run to do that.

Mr. Cook asked about other options. He noted that there had been discussions about 48<sup>th</sup> & "O" Street being utilized by the Health Department for their expansion project. The comments have been that that is too far East to serve the community you want served. What about Antelope Valley? What if we were to say we don't want to expand at this site, but go someplace else, build a facility. We're spending unbelievable sums of money to completely gut and rebuild a portion of town and that seems like where you really want to be as far as the population you want to serve. Mr. Dart answered that the Health Department had looked at a lot of other current facilities. That was our first option - to go elsewhere. There weren't any buildings that we could have gone into that were even remotely affordable, or remotely adequate to serve our needs now. If the City and County want to build us a new building someplace else...that still would allow us to serve the population we're most trying to serve, we're not adverse to that. We're trying to do this so that we can be responsible on what we spend, still stay within an area where we're serving the community that we serve, and still maintain the community facility. We have looked at all these issues and, of course, a lot comes down to costs and where we should be to best serve the community. That keeps coming back to this location.

Mr. Cook noted that we are building a new building on this site. We're connecting it to the old one, but it's a new building. Mr. Dart answered that if you're talking a new building someplace, the cost would be twice that. Mr. Cook commented that he understood that, but the question then would be what would become of this site? Let's just imagine that the neighbors voted that we should go to another site and we decided that we would look into that. Would this be sold? What might the options be?

Mr. Dart answered that it is owned by the Public Building Commission right now and that is something that would have to be decided. Mr. Dart stated that would be something - that they would have to put that building to some use, but he had no idea what that might be. He commented that the Health Department is a good neighbor and we are always trying to be sensitive to the neighborhood's needs. He added that they were aware of some of these traffic issues and have been working with everyone who brings issues forward to them. If the Health Department left the area, he did not know what would happen to the site.

Ms. Halstead commented that the other thing that would have to be kept in mind, if the entire Department were relocated, we would be looking at over 60,000 square feet to do that. It's not just office costs. These are primarily office space costs. We'd also be looking at relocating the clinic. Then we have to start looking at the lab, the dental laboratories, the exam rooms -all of which will be much more costly than looking jonly at office space that can just implement systems furniture.

Mr. Dart commented that when we really drill down to that detail, it really becomes great. We keep looking at what we can best do to still provide the services to the community. That's why it keeps coming back to where we are now. Mr. Cook asked if the Public Building Commission were to sell this site, it would end up being out of public control....and could potentially be a commercial use that perhaps would have even more of an impact on the neighborhood. We wouldn't know that. Mr. Dart responded that that was correct.

Mr. Cook commented that the buildings couldn't, as a practical option, be torn down. We could put City and County Offices in that weren't the Health Department Office, but then we're just exchanging one department for another and he didn't know that that would be an improvement from the neighborhood impact perspective.

Mr. Hudkins stated that one of the first concepts was to go East -straight out east from where the building was. There has been some concern that the architects or the Health Department haven't been concerned about the neighborhood, but when that option was presented to go straight on east - out into the park, with the addition - everyone just said No! That wouldn't fly. This was because we listened to the neighborhood. We went back and studied how we could minimize the intrusion into the park. Don't think people haven't been sensitive trying to work with the neighborhood. The main entrance had originally been planned on the east side, even if we built to the north. We again said "no". That would have brought too much traffic and congestion to the park, too. We brought the building extension north and moved the circular entrance to the west to bring that traffic back out to "O" Street. A lot of concepts have been looked at and this one that was presented this morning was the one that looked the most practical.

Mr. Hudkins continued, noting that they had really worked with B&J Enterprises on the project. The tenants of that building pleaded with us not to take that building because they had been there for a number of years and they felt it would really be detrimental to have to relocate their business. You can put a dollar figure on relocating, but dollars just don't pay for the upheaval and the twenty years of experience at one location. That was another reason we went back to the architects and asked them to bring forward something else that would have the least impact to the people that are there. This may not be perfect, but don't think a lot of time and effort hasn't gone in to it; and this is the best we've been able to come up with. Perhaps after today's meeting we'll have better ideas. But that's where we've been and he had wanted to share that with everyone.

Mr. Svoboda stated that we really need to wrap the meeting up now. And requested last comments from anyone. Mr. Stevens complimented the Health Department and the architectural firm for investigating a lot of alternatives. He thought they may have had shattered the world record by having 8-10 options for their consideration. [Laughter]

Mr. Svoboda asked Mr. Johnson, as the Director of Parks and Recreation, that in order for him to come along with this proposal to go east into the park, he must have had a great deal of information at his fingertips as to the use of that end of the park and potential use for that area of the park. What had he found from that information? Mr. Johnson stated that one of the challenges has been the correlation between Woods Park and "O" Street. It is not an area where you'll have active recreation activities at that end of the park.

That part of the park has two primary benefits. One is that it contributes to the green and open space along "O" Street. That is an important character of that park. The other is that it's a "pass over" part of the park. Now that the walk-way goes through there, the intent is to provide the sculpture walk. In Mr. Johnson's opinion, that would be the long-term function of that northern 150 feet of Woods Park. This proposal, unlike some of the others, does not cut into the active area of Woods Park. There are a couple of needs that Woods Park has which is some additional parking to serve the "activated" areas in the northern end of the park. We talked a lot about the fact that , if this [proposal] moves into design and development, we'll need to insure that this is a "green parking lot" - like the one in front of the Zoo, where there is a lot of green space incorporated into it and it's a nice transition into the park; and not like a "K" Mart' parking lot ' with a lot of asphalt and no green incorporated into the plan.

Another thing is the interface of that building. That can't be the back side of that building facing into the park. That must be a very public, attractive side of that building, because it will become part of the character of Woods Park.

Mr. Svoboda noted that this would end the discussion on this presentation. He stated that the Public Building Commission would hear a presentation on this today. He explained that the Common would wait to hear a report from the PBC as to what process we'll follow from that point. He thanked everyone involved in the presentation.

ADJOURNMENT - Mr. Heier moved adjournment. The Common adjourned by general consensus of the Common Members at approximately 10:30 a.m.

*Submitted by*  
*Joan V. Ray*  
*Council Secretary*

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